

Ref: RDB/RP/MM/03.07.2018

01 August 2018

Councillor Michael Michael,
Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment,
County Hall,
Atlantic Wharf,
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Councillor Michael,

Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 3 July 2018

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee I would like to thank the officers for attending the Committee meeting on Tuesday 3 July 2018. As you are aware the meeting received items titled 'Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate Delivery Plan 2018/19' and 'Planning, Transport & Environment Quarter 3 & 4 Performance Reports 2017/18'. The comments and observations made by Members following these items are set out in this letter. Due to the cross cutting nature of both of these items, the points made below are not specifically allocated against a single item:

- During the meeting I asked if there had been any progress in identifying a site for a new Household Waste Recycling Centre in the north of Cardiff. It was explained that Strategic Estates is currently looking into the matter and hope to provide the Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate with details of a potential site in the next six to eight weeks. Due to commercial sensitivity it was not possible to provide any more detail at the meeting. The Committee fully understands the commercial sensitivities around such a proposal; however, they would ask that you provide the Committee with a briefing as soon as a formal position is agreed.
- The Committee is interested in finding out when the Lamby Way Solar Farm will be fully operational. I would be grateful if you could provide them with a timeline which includes key actions required to deliver the new

facility; in particular when it will be completed and details on the amounts of electricity it is anticipated to produce.

- The Committee is disappointed to see that sickness rates have increased across the Council and that during 2017/18 every single directorate failed to meet their full time equivalent days lost per person target. In particular, the Committee is concerned that sickness rates were higher in 2017/18 for the former City Operations Directorate and Economic Development Directorate than they were in 2016/17. Having stated their concern the Committee would be grateful if you could provide a summary of sickness rates by team for all of the parts of the newly formed Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate. This should include:
 - Quarterly summaries for 2016/17 and 2017/18;
 - A breakdown of long and short-term sickness for 2016/17 and 2017/18;
 - Details of any seasonal fluctuations in sickness during 2016/17 and 2017/18;
 - A summary of the main causes of sickness;
 - Examples of best practice that are currently being reviewed by the Council for reducing sickness rates from local authorities, other public bodies and the private sector;
 - Details of the plan that the newly formed Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate is currently developing to help reduce sickness rates.

- It was noted at the meeting that the Economic Development Directorate ran a budget shortfall of £1.642m during 2017/18. At the meeting I asked the Director for Planning, Transport & Environment if the financial challenges of this shortfall would transfer into the newly formed directorate with the services coming across from the Economic Development Directorate. He explained that inheriting parts of the shortfall would be a challenge and that staff from his area were working with Finance to fully assess the consequences and then develop a plan to address the potential financial shortfall. At this point I would like to note the concern of

the Committee and hope that the zero based cost accounting approach that you are planning to follow can deliver a better outcome for the Council. I would ask that you keep us updated on the progress of dealing with this inherited budget shortfall during the 2018/19 municipal year.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the content of this letter.

Regards,

Handwritten signature of Ramesh Patel in black ink.

Councillor Ramesh Patel
Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Andrew Gregory - Director of City Operations
- Matt Wakelam - Operational Manager, Infrastructure & Operations
- Davina Fiore - Director of Governance & Legal Services
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee